

Appl. No. 09/864,836
Amdt. Dated April 24, 2006
Reply to Office Action of December 22, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A disposable diaper comprising:

an elastically stretchable covering member for covering a diaper wearer's crotch and waist regions;

a liquid-pervious sheet having a skin contactable surface for contacting with skin of said diaper wearer;

a liquid-absorbent core member sandwiched between said liquid-pervious sheet and said covering member;

discrete elastic members provided along transverse side edges of said diaper to extend circumferentially along leg-openings that are defined when the diaper is put on the diaper wearer;

said covering member consisting of an elastically stretchable first layer and an inelastically stretchable second layer formed of a plurality of continuous fibers, said continuous fibers being fixed to said elastically stretchable first layer in bonding zones spaced apart from each other so that a ratio of L_1/D_1 , where L_1 is a length of said continuous fibers extending between a first pair of said bonding zones in a centrally located first zone on said covering member and D_1 is a distance in a

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straight line between said first pair of bonding zones in said first zone of said covering member is larger than a ratio of L_2/D_2 , where L_2 is a length of said continuous fibers extending between a second pair of said bonding zones in a second zone on said covering member and D_2 is a distance in a straight line between said second pair of bonding zones in said second zone of said covering member, whereby said covering member is more easily stretched in a direction away from the skin contactable surface in said first zone than in said second zone of said covering member, and said first zone being adjacent said liquid-absorbent core member and at least substantially coextensive with said liquid-absorbent core member, so that pressure exerted on said covering member by said liquid-absorbent core member will stretch the first zone in said direction away from ~~of~~ the skin contactable surface without exerting any pressure on said discrete elastic members.

Claim 2 (Previously presented): The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said first zone is a transversely middle zone of said diaper.

Claim 3 (Previously presented): The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said elastically stretchable first layer is formed of an elastically stretchable film.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said continuous fibers of said inelastically stretchable second layer are made of polypropylene.

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Claim 5 (Previously presented): The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said elastically stretchable first layer is formed from a liquid-impervious sheet and lies inside said second layer.

Claim 6 (Previously presented): The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said elastically stretchable first layer is formed from a liquid-impervious sheet and lies inside said inelastically stretchable second layer so that said elastically stretchable first layer functions as a liquid-impervious backsheet for said liquid-absorbent core member.

Claim 7 (Withdrawn): A process for making a disposable diaper having an elastically stretchable covering member for covering a diaper wearer's crotch and waist regions, a liquid-pervious sheet for contacting with skin of said diaper wearer, and a liquid-absorbent core member sandwiched between said liquid-pervious sheet and said covering member, said process comprising the steps of:

providing an elastically stretchable first layer destined to form said covering member;
providing a second layer formed with a plurality of inelastic stretchable continuous fibers;
bonding said elastically stretchable first layer and said second layer together at a plurality of intermittently formed bonding zones to thereby form a composite sheet;
stretching only a portion of said composite sheet in one direction so that said elastically stretchable first layer of said portion may be elastically stretched together with said continuous fibers;

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allowing said composite sheet to contract under a contractile force of said first elastically stretchable layer to form said covering member; and

incorporating said cover member into a disposable diaper having a liquid-absorbent core member so that said stretched and contracted portion of said composite sheet is adjacent and at least substantially coextensive with said liquid-absorbent core member.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said elastically stretchable first layer is formed of a nonwoven fabric made of crimped fibers.

Claim 9 (Previously presented): The diaper according to Claim 1, wherein said continuous fibers of said inelastically stretchable second layer are made of propylene copolymers.